
The MCA Advisory

The Newsletter of Medal Collectors of America

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From the Editor

We welcome to these pages Fernando Chao (h), the co-author of our book on Admiral Vernon. In this issue Fernando has submitted an article on those Indian peace medals used in Hispanic America. The information contained therein adds immeasurably to what has been published on the subject in the English language, amongst which the article by Steve Cox in our July issue. Thank you Fernando.

Max Spiegel's article on the William Pitt medal puts much flesh on the bones of what is to be found in Betts. As was true of his article on the SPAC medals in our August issue, his unearthing of contemporary source material adds mightily to our enjoyment of the Betts series.

We included a few photos from ANA 2010 in this issue but will more in the next.

AL MERITO Medals

(by Fernando Chao (h)

In Steve Cox's most interesting article "The Rare Spanish Carlos III, Al Merito Medals, a Chronology 1764 to 1783", he has demonstrated that these medals were Military Awards, given mainly to Indian chiefs. He has also noted the different places they were sent and the quantities distributed. I think it is a most interesting article, not only for those medals that were given to Chiefs of Indian tribes on the northern part of America, but also by the notice given that they were also minted to serve in other parts of the American Provinces, viceroyalties, "gobernaciones" or captaincies.

The Spanish origin of all of them provides us a clue to the importance given by the Spanish authorities to the good relations that had to be maintained at all times with the "Indian" chiefs, called in South America, "caciques".

In the Province of Peru, in the year of 1780, there was an uprising of the native communities under the leadership of the Cacique of Tungasuca, José Gabriel Tupac Amaru, who was of noble origin. It was in response to the cruel measures previously taken by Don Joaquín de Alós y Brú, who ruled despotically in the locality of Chaianta.

The revolt lasted for three years and many of the Spaniards and Indians friendly to the Spanish died during that cruel time, as did many of the ones who revolted. Finally by the joint efforts of Jáuregui, Viceroy of Perú and Vértiz of Buenos Aires, the rebellion was extinguished and all of the rebel Indian chiefs as also most of their next of kin, were put to death by hanging or quartering.

One of the documents that Alejandro Rosa reproduces in his 1898 text, informs us of a medal minted in Potosí, ordered by D. Gerónimo Manuel de Ruedas, President of the Charcas Royal "Audiencia" to be given in 1781 to the faithful caciques of Porca and Yamparæz with the legends in the obverse: "Viva el rey Carlos III" and on the reverse: "A la lealtad – Potosí – 1781", which means "Long live Carlos III" and "To the loyalty – Potosí – 1781". The whereabouts of this medal is today unknown as the last reference to it was in the sale of the only piece known to exist, in the Andrés Lamas collection's auction in 1905. It probably went later to the Enrique Peña collection, today dispersed, or to the "Fernandez Blanco" Museum, where it couldn't be found.

By royal order of the 28th January 1783, it was decided to strike, also in Potosí, another medal to celebrate the final victory and to be given as a grateful memento to the "faithful Indians" and also to the Spaniards that had acted gallantly during the revolt.



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The legends of this medal are in the obverse: "CARLOS · III · EL PIADOSO PADRE DE LA PATRIA" and on both sides of the King's head "AÑO / 1783". On the reverse it can be read: "EN PREMIO DE LA FIDELIDAD – JUST. ET PAZ OSC. SUNT". The translations should be "Carlos III pious father of his country" and "Award to the loyalty – Justice and Peace are kisses". The diameter is 35 mm. and weights 13.6 grams. It was in the collections of Cunietti-Ferrando, later in the Alberto Derman collection and it was sold in the Cayón's auction of December 2007 (lot 131).

Arnaldo Cunietti-Ferrando in his work published in 1976 about this last medal of which this one example is known, says that four were made in gold (one was awarded to Don Manuel Chuquimia, a "Noble Indian" and cacique of Copacabana, who had remained faithful, and the other three to Spanish officers) and probably fifty more in silver.

Both these medals, that make reference to a single historical event, are more of the kind of "Indian Peace Medals", as seen in the John W. Adams collection of Medallic Distinctions awarded to North American first peoples; Lot N° 5012 is a superb example of a large "Al Merito" piece. So these two medals are not typical "Al Mérito" medals, though I believe they were inspired by those "popular" awards the Indian Chiefs were used to receive. But Alejandro Rosa, on page 6 ends with another reference which I will translate:

"In the "Historical Relation of the events of the José Gabriel Tupac-Amaru Rebelion in the Provinces of Peru" published by D. Pedro de Angelis, there's a reference to a gold medal with Carlos III bust on one side and

on the reverse the words "AL MERITO", handmade, on behalf of the Cuzco (Perú n.t.) Bishop D. Juan Manuel de Moscoso y Peralta, who had been before on that same charge in Tucuman (Argentina n.t.) on the name of the sovereign so as to reward the fidelity of two caciques and three principal Indians.

We don't know if the Bishop's resolution received later the King's approval, who – as one of his biographers say – had some distrust on his behalf, as the Bishop had been recognized as adhering to the Indians' uprising."

On the auction of Derman's Collection, lot number 130, is a large cast silver medal that was bought along with a large lot of coins and medals from Bolivia and Peru. The obverse has been modeled after the Vives N° 47 medal, described on page 29. A copper piece, was auctioned as lot N° 74 in a public auction by Ponterio & Associates, in their sale # 87 on April 1997.





These were medals struck in Spain in 1776, known also in silver, for the farmers of the Bishopric of Malaga and, evidently one of them, made its way to this side of the world with some other souvenirs in those years previous to 1783. On the obverse of this 61 mm. piece, the legend reads “· CARLOS · III · PADRE · DE · LA · PATRIA”. On the lower part of the King’s arms, the inscription “G. GIL” signature of the engraver.

The reverse has a large legend referring to the aid dispensed by the King for the impoverished Malaga farmers.

CARLOS III



On the obverse of our “gilt” silver medal of 58.6 mm and a weight of 98.5 gr. we find the same image and legend, without the engraver’s signature and all slightly blurred by the effect of the casting method, that has also diminished the diameter. On the reverse, under an engraved Malta cross, we find the engraved words “AL MERITO”. It has got an incorporated suspension ring and has been used extensively.

This is most probably the “third” medal described by Rosa. The first one, with the date 1781, was in Lama’s collection and later disappeared. The second, Cayón lot N° 131 and for the moment, the only one known of those minted with the date 1783. This piece, Cayón N° 130 in that auction, is a huge cast award to be hung as all the medals coined in Spain were, as referred by Steve Cox, and it’s front part was taken from the obverse of the Spanish medal of 1776,

The idea of making medal awards for those “caciques” is obviously inspired by one of the varieties described by Cox that must have been received by some Indian Chief of Perú, before the Indian revolt, but was known and had been seen by the rest of the community. If we should describe it, it would certainly apply, in a general way, to the pieces that came from Spain, as it shows Carlos III’s bust in its front, and the words “AL MERITO”

on the reverse. The principal difference is that it's been handmade, not struck, it's a huge medal with a big quantity of silver in it, and bears a mercury-gold bath that approaches the description on that reference to those five "gold" medals that the Cuzco Bishop ordered to be made.

In my opinion, it is another "Al Merito" medal, but made in an urgent situation caused by the biggest and longest Indian rebellion that happened in Spanish America till the Independence wars.

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A Contemporary Advertisement a William Pitt Medal (Betts-516)

(Max B. Spiegel)

William Pitt's vociferous calls for the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1765 and 1766 made him popular with the American colonists. Several medals (Betts-514 to 523) were struck in 1766 to honor the Parliamentarian, who would be appointed Prime Minister that same year. One of these medals, Betts-516, was advertised extensively in both England and the American Colonies. These advertisements identify the original source of the obverse portrait, the three distributors of the medals, and the different compositions available.

The first advertisement for Betts-516 appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle* (London, England) on April 10, 1766. It reads:

"The Medal of the Right Hon. Mr. Pitt, engraved by Mr. Pingo, after a Model of Mr. Gosset, is now highly executed, and generally esteemed a very striking Likeness. Mr. Kentish begs Leave to acquaint the Nobility and Gentry, that they are now to be sold in Gold, Silver, and Copper, at his Shop, opposite the Royal-Exchange; at Mr. Watkins's Optician, at Charing-Cross; and at Mr. Gray's, Cutler, in Bond Street. – Great Allowances to be made to American Traders and all Country Dealers."

Interestingly, the advertisement says that the medals can be purchased in gold, silver, and copper. While copper and silver examples appear with relative frequency, I am unaware of any Betts-516 medals struck in gold. It could be that none sold and the stock was melted, but there is also the exciting possibility that a gold specimen awaits discovery. That the advertisement specifically notes "Great Allowances to be made to American Traders" indicates that the distributors of the medal expected strong demand from the American Colonies.

The “Mr. Gosset” referenced in the article is Isaac Gosset (1713-1799), a distinguished wax modelist from the 18th Century. Born in Jersey, Gosset began an apprenticeship in London under his uncle, Matthew Gosset, a sculptor and wax modeler. Originally trained to carve wooden frames, Isaac Gosset later became well regarded for his wax cameo portraits of gentlemen. Thomas Pingo designed his medal after Gosset’s portrait of William Pitt. Gosset’s works were apparently used as the models for several other medals, and he is known to have collaborated with medalist John Kirk.

The William Pitt medal by Pingo was first advertised in England in April 1766 and by the end of June the same advertisement began to appear in American Colonial newspapers. Another brief notice about the medal was published around the same time. On June 26, 1766, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* wrote: “There is a handsome Medal struck and distributed, about the Size of a Crown-piece, on which is the Head of Mr. Pitt, with his Name, and for the Reverse the following Inscription: *The Man who, having saved the Parent, pleaded with Success for her Children.*” It goes on to describe a statue of Pitt that was erected in Cork. These notices appear in several newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Betts-516 is very similar to Betts-515 with the main difference being the lack of the engraver’s name at the truncation of the bust on the latter. Betts-515 is widely considered to have been struck in 1863 from copy dies, although there remains some debate as to whether all examples were struck at that time. A third medal, Betts-514, shares the same reverse inscription as Betts-515 and 516, but it is smaller and rarer. It appears that the advertisements for the William Pitt medals were successful because these pieces are relatively available today. Thankfully, one of the advertisements recorded the name of the modelist whose work was adopted by Pingo for the medal’s design. It will be interesting to see

if the advertisement proves correct and a gold example of Betts-516 surfaces.



Isaac Gosset, Wax Relief of William Pitt the Elder, the 1st Earl of Chatham

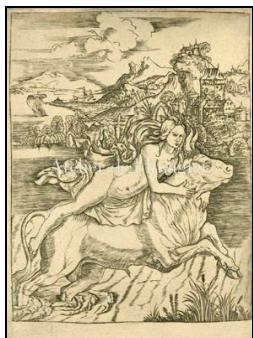


Obverse of Betts 516 courtesy of Stacks’.



1766 William Pitt Medal. Thomas Pingo after Isaac Gosset. Betts-516.

Image Courtesy of Stack's.



Métamorphoses d'Europe asbl

Henry Scott Goodman of KarlGoetz.com will be exhibiting a number of his Karl Goetz medals and medallions in the upcoming “Princess Europa” exposition, presented under the aegis *Métamorphoses d'Europe* organization, the exhibition will be held in Brussels, Belgium beginning October 1 and ending February 7, 2010. KarlGoetz.com is also acting as agent for several submitted medallions from the Saginaw Valley Collection.

This may well be the first invitation to exhibit Goetz material within a prestigious, European-wide art venue since Goetz’ successful international competition in Madrid, 1951.



Hôtel de Ville

The exhibition will present 200 original pieces of art (numismatics, stamps collections, medals, paintings, Chinas, prints, engravings, posters,); all illustrating the representation of Europe throughout some thirty centuries (300 BC to present). The main theme to show how the representation of ‘Europe’ - enshrined within the iconography of the Greco-roman mythology- has, throughout time, been seen as the emblem of the European Continent.

The exhibition will be housed at the Town Hall of Brussels; Grand Place, (Ville de Bruxelles) in rooms; Salle des Milices and Salle Ogilvale.

Photos from ANA 2010 (more to come)



From Margolis exhibit



From Massachusetts Historical Exhibit



From Margolis exhibit



From Massachusetts Historical Exhibit

Letters to the Editor

Hello Mr. Adams,

My friend Robert Hoge was kind enough to provide your email address to me. While I principally collect medieval coins (my book is "The Early Dated Coins of Europe 1234-1500"), I started a collection of Betts medals a few years ago since I was always buying items from European auctions and they were often sold there. That meant having your book on "The Medals Concerning John Law and the Mississippi System" was of course necessary and I have enjoyed it immensely.

The reason I am contacting you is to let you know that I may have acquired an unpublished type, courtesy of eBay. The reverse matches your reverse of S-14 (reverse f). The obverse is unknown to me. Any thoughts you have on such piece would be greatly appreciated. I look forward to meeting you in Boston at the ANA.

Thanks very much.

Robert A. Levinson
ANA, ANS, PNG-af



Good morning, Mr. Levinson,

My apologies for the delay in replying, but a most exiting ANA Convention here in Boston has taken precedence.

I haven't seen your piece before, so I scurried to Wohlfahrt where I found eight matings of the "Pax Pax" reverse, but none with your obverse. Clearly, the variety is quite rare, no doubt due to the heavy and awkward die break shown on your example. As to the John Law connection, all of the "Pax Pax" matings are dated 1736 or 1737 and, consequently, none belong in the Law series. I included S-14 in the "Associated" grouping as a nod to tradition (it had been included by earlier authors) but your discovery can not lay a similar claim. You must be satisfied with having discovered a Wermuth medal so rare it is not even in Wohlfahrt.

My regards,

John Adams

Dear John,

Following up on your response to George Kolbe's inquiry about the Major John Andre medals in last month's Advisory: the two specimens at the New-York Historical Society; those presented to David Williams and John Paulding, were indeed stolen from the Society

in 1975. The medal stolen from MHS was the one awarded to Van Wart. I have attached old photos of N-YHS's stolen medals. The Paulding medal is engraved with a presentation inscription, while the Williams medal has only his initials.

Best,

Margi

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Dear Ms Bentley,

Congratulations on your new exhibition, "Precious Metals, Au to Zn" within the walls still haunted by my Fort Ticonderoga predecessor, Col. Edward P. Hamilton. I have lost track of your co-curator, John W. Adams,

since my retirement from Fort Ty a couple of years ago. I wonder if you would be so kind as to forward to him the message below.

Thank you in advance.

Nicholas Westbrook

Dear Nick--

Thank you for the kind words and I'm delighted to put you back in touch with John, whose email is above under cc so that he can read your Montreal medal query.

Very best wishes,

Anne E. Bentley

Dear Mr. Adams,

We met more than a decade ago when you visited to study Fort Ticonderoga's modest numismatic collection. Congratulations on your new exhibit with Ms. Bentley at the Mass Historical, and on your award last week from the Numismatic Bibliomania Society!

I am trying to track down a 1760 Montreal medal presented to Songose, a Mohican, and lost along the Mourning Kill near Ballston Spa, NY. The medal was recovered in September 1875 by one Mr. Kelly and published by the redoubtable William Beauchamp in 1903. Sadly, no one has ever attempted to build a database of the current whereabouts of the Indian (mostly Iroquois) artifacts published by Beauchamp during his decades of study. George Hamell, the now-retired curator at the NYS Museum suggests that you might have encountered the SONGOSE medal in the course of your own comprehensive study of numismatics in museum collections across the northeast.

I would be most grateful for any help you can offer.--Nick

Nicholas Westbrook

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Hi Nick –

The good news is that the medal is alive. The bad news is that it has been injured since last seen by Mr. Beauchamp.

It can be viewed in its current state as lot 47 in the John J. Ford Jr. Sale, part XVI, dated 10/17/06. There the provenance is given as "ex a Mr Kelly in 1875, Joseph Wescot, E. Hallenbeck in 1902, C. A. Laframboisie, Robert Brule on June 8, 1961". The obverse is apparently unaltered but the reverse has experienced a physical as well as a chemical scrubbing, such that Songose can be read only by tilting the piece to the light (but it is definitely there). My guess is that Mr. Brule, who was once accused of removing items from the Chateau Rameszay, removed this medal from some other institution and then re-sold it to Ford, attempting to efface the original recipient's name for an all too obvious reason. If you believe the cataloguer's more sanguine explanation of the damage, you will have retained faith in the tooth fairy.

I am delighted to hear from you and happy to help.

Best,
John Adams

VERNON SECTION

John,

During the time the A.N.A. show was scheduled, we were in upstate New York for 10 days. Hope you were able to add some coins/medals to your various collections from the show. Recently, I did acquire another Vernon medal, and the collection is now at 137 different. You probably already saw the result

on eBay, but if not a copy of your book was popular and sold for \$113.61.

Warren Lloyd

Hello John,

The August issue of the *MCA Advisory* has just dropped through my letter-box, and it is clearly developing as a forum for the exchange of medallic ideas. This is particularly useful in a subject such as ours, which, as often as not, asks questions for which there is often no immediate answer.

Daniel Fearon's discovery of an unpublished 'Munday' Vernon medal, which you have illustrated in the August issue, makes the case beautifully, and so, while sending my congratulations to you and your co-conspirators on the way that the *MCA Advisory* is growing, I will throw in my tuppence worth with the suggestion that this Vernon and the other with Saturday on the reverse (Adams-Chao UNI-15) may be some kind of entrance ticket or pass for something with which Vernon was subsequently involved, on his return to England, post 1739-41, rather than relating directly to Portobello et al. One such group was the Anti-Gallican Society, formed against the importation of French produce, and of which Vernon was president, and of which there is a medal dated 1745, but this is, as I say, just an idea.

With all good wishes,

Chris Eimer

[**Best explanation I've heard.—Ed.**]

We are indebted to Frederick Vogel III for these extraordinary examples of Vernoniana. The first is a 1741 brown Soltglaze stoneware puzzle jug; below the medallion of ships in battle are the words "Porto Bello" and below these the name "Jose

Puttock.” No other such example is recorded in the literature.

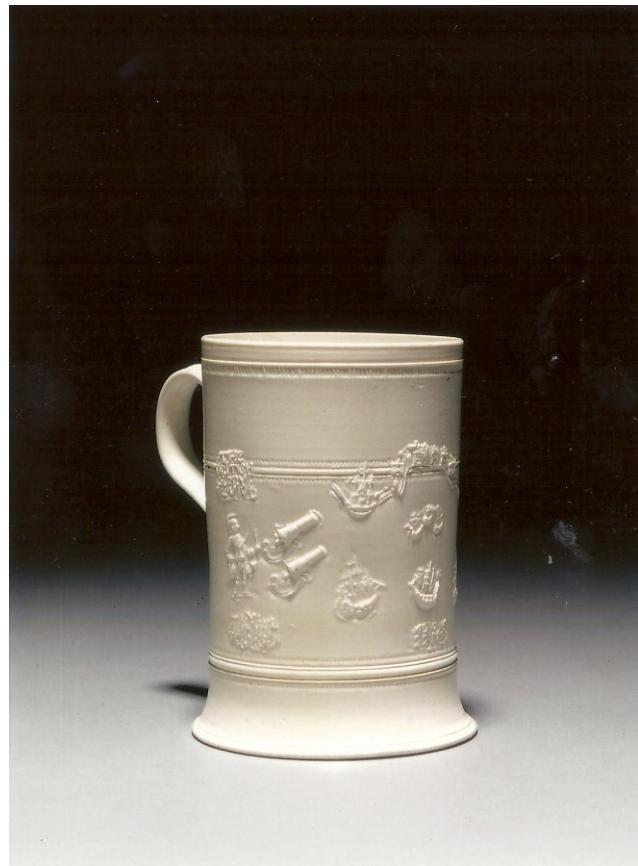
The image on the right of the jug is a white stoneware saltglaze tankard, probably made in Staffordshire. It carries a motif of cannons, many ships, a city-harbor landscape and the legend, broken into five word groupings: “The British Glory Revived;” “By Admiral Vernon;” “Nov: Ye 22 1739;” “He Took Porto Bello;” “With Six Ships Only.”

Actually “extraordinary” is not the right word to describe these two pieces—they are near miraculous.

John Adams



Courtesy of Frederick Vogel III



Courtesy of Frederick Vogel III